

STONE WALLS has just completed its first full year of subscriptions and it has been somewhat of a long pilgrimage. We at the helm have been learning how to set a magazine in motion. We have used this year to get acquainted: acquainted with you readers (and vice-versa), acquainted with printers, acquainted with business practices. And with all candor, I have to admit that our strength has been in the first two areas.

In the past I have used this inside front cover for a lot of things: to talk about our purpose, to explain changes in format, and to thank our contributors and readers for their support. In this issue I want to do a little out-loud thinking in a rather serious vein, thinking about our choice to live here.

We have chosen to live in these hills because we know the effect that our daily experiences have on our temperaments and physical well-being. We humans have accumulated an awesome body of knowledge about the world outside of ourselves and how to control it. We have also acquired a lot of information about the body and some skill in controlling its responses and correcting its defects. Neither of these acquisitions of knowledge, however, is of value unless we use them with care and by choice.

STONE WALLS, in its small way, is a salute to the residents of these hilltowns who live here **care**fully and who, everyday, make a choice in honor of the quality of their lives. It is through such thoughtfull choices, after all, that man enhances his humanness.

The great Photographer, Ansel Adams, once said, "As we grow older, mirrors become windows." STONE WALLS began as, and continues to be, a mirror of our everyday lives, a mirror to, hopefully, help us continue to see.

Welcome to our new board members, Barbara Brainerd, Lucy Conant, and Waino Tuominen.

STONE WALLS
Box 85
Huntington, Massachusetts 01050
Vol. 3, No.1.

STONE WALLS is published quarterly. Subscriptions are \$6.00 a year, \$1.60 for individual copies. The retail price of individual copies may be modified only with the permission of the Editorial Board. We welcome unsolicited manuscripts and illustrations from and about the hilltowns of the Berkshires. We also welcome letters from our readers. No portion of this publication may be reproduced in any form, with the exception of brief excerpts for review purposes, without the express consent of the editors of STONE WALLS. ©STONE WALLS 1977

Cover Photos by Ellie Lazarus; Lab Work by Yvon Hebert Sugar House on Clark Wright Rd., Middlefield Printed by John Latka and Company, Southampton Rd., Westfield, Mass.

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end of his life particularly interested and successful in providing spiritual leadership to young men, and in gaining their confidence and devotion.

In the spring of 1880, Frederick and his brother went to Europe for a year of travel and study. Frederick studied at the University of Bonn in Germany. When he returned to the United States he became pastor of a church in EastBrooklyn, for six months, was at Moncton, New Brunswick for a year, and for a year at Allston, Massachusetts during which time he completed his studies at Boston University. He chose always to serve in parishes which were newly established, or in need of a new leader, and usually left when they became secure.

In the summer of 1883 he made a visit to Worthington and was invited to supply the pulpit which was then vacant. He was attracted to this parish because he would not be subjected to the "restraints, the formalities, the artificialities in social life which are quite sure to invade municipalities everywhere." This was a quiet town of farmers, scattered over hills and valleys, a town of comfort and prosperity. "The meeting house, as it stood when Frederick preached his first sermon there, was a town land mark. Standing in about the center of the town, on high table-land, and painted white, it could be seen from many hill-tops both within and beyond the town limits." Frederick was happy to be in a country place again, and he found "in the hearts of the Worthington people a warm response to his earnest efforts in their behalf."

Some of the "fruits" of his service in Worthington still remain. The stand of maple trees on the common next to the church was planted by Frederick Sargent Huntington with the help of the men of his congregation. The present church, built after the meeting house described above burned in 1887, was designed and built under the direction of the Reverend Mr. Huntington. And, of course, the library, which was begun with books from his own library and is still directed by a corporation derived from the library association which he founded.

In 1888 he had sadly decided to leave Worthington for a newly formed parish in Indianapolis. He preached his last sermon on August 12, though even then he was feeling far from well. There was at the time an epidemic of typhoid fever, and feeling sure that he was suffering from that disease, he left Worthington to go to his mother's house in Amherst where he believed that he would receive better medical care than in a small country town. Those who had typhoid, but remained in Worthington, recovered; Mr. Huntington did not. He died on September 4, 1888 and was buried in Worthington on September 7. This was the first funeral held in the newly finished church. At his request there was "no black, only flowers." Each mourner brought one single blossom to cast into the grave as the. casket of Frederick Sargent Huntington was lowered into its final resting place.

^{*} This and following quotations are taken from A Memorial of Frederick S. Huntington by W. E. Huntington, 1891.

WHIPMAKING in the WESTFIELD RIVER VALLEY

by Robert K. O'Neil and John O'Leary

This article, originally written by Robert O'Neil in 1974, has since been updated by John O'Leary. The Photographs represent the present operation. Rick Laurie has illustrated the individual whip-types and John O'Leary has described them.

In the rolling foothills of the Berkshires, nestled alongside winding Route 20 in Russell, Massachusetts, is a tiny brick building within which can be found the knowledge and skill of 175 years of manufacturing excellence. The building bears no sign or any other indication that what goes on within represents a proud tradition once known throughout the world. With pride rather than publicity, the people inside simply stick to their business, secure in the fact that they are a very select breed.

The people in the brick building make whips, and the company, Great American

Leather Products, is one of the last two of its type in this area, once the whipmaking center of the world. Kessie and John O'Leary, residents of Blandford, own the company. They purchased it about a year and a half ago from Edward Grudowski, who together with his sister Sophie, instructed the O'Learys in the time-tested methods for making each different type of whip. The Grudowskis in turn, learned the trade from their father, who originally established the Great American Company.

Whipmaking in this area dates back to 1801, when Titus Pease and Thomas Rose

of Westfield attached a leather lash to a hickory pole to make a whip, modeled after an English style. Gradually, more refined and intricate methods were used in whip-making and the industry grew to be the major one in Westfield. Hirum Hull began the manufacturing of whips in 1810, and was employing 40 people by 1840. When Hull & Son consolidated with another whip company in 1855 to form the American Whip Company, whip making had become fully entrenched in the economy, and the future, of the Westfield area.

Just before the invention of the automobile, in the late 19th century, the shipmaking industry burgeoned into a \$2 million, 40-firm enterprise from which 95% of the whips in the world were purchased.

The proliferation of whip shops in the area through the 1920's was so great, says Ed Grudowski, that "if you got laid off in one place you could just walk across the street and go to work for another whip company." In addition to the many whip factories, companies making essential whipmaking products such as lashes and stocks (not to mention tanneries) dotted the Westfield area.

Women of Westfield made an important contribution to the family income by bringing whip production home with them, patiently tying hundreds of cord tips to prevent ravelling. In short, people of the Westfield area in the 19th and early 20th century were consumed by the whip industry and enjoyed what they thought would be perpetual prosperity.



JOHN O'LEARY POINTS OUT A FEW OF THE MANY DIFFERENT STYLES OF WHIPS MADE BY THE COMPANY.



INSIDE THE OLD SCHOOL HOUSE. THE BOOKSHELVES ARE NOW LADEN WITH MANY DIFFERENT TYPES OF LEATHER.

But as the automobile (and even the bicycle) became more available and less expensive, the whip industry began to fade. In 1893, the year of the Duryea brothers' successful test run of a gasoline-enginepropelled motor vehicle in nearby Springfield, there were 42 whip companies and 47 whip-related factories in the Westfield area. When Henry Ford introduced his Model T in 1908, the numbers had fallen to 34 whip companies and 23 shops related to the whip industry. Every whipmaker could see that the door for the automobile as a universal means of transportation was opening and that the door on the whip industry was closing. It was time to look for other means of livelihood.

Most whipmakers did just that. One who did not, however, was a young Polish immigrant named Grudowski. Instead of despairing of the future for whipmaking, in 1929 (does that ring a bell?) Grudowski opened a whip shop. A worker in a whip factory since his arrival in this country, Mr. Grudowski felt that he understood whipmaking skills as well as he did any other

means of livelihood and, moreover, sensed that there would still be a market for whips, even as the automobile was taking over. So, as other whip companies in Westfield were closing or adapting to the changing times by manufacturing something completely different, Grudowski opened a shop on Meadow Street, still found a considerable market for whips, and taught whipmaking to his son, Ed, and to his daughter, Sophie.

In 1929, the elder Grudowski had no idea that he was starting what would not only be a long lasting business venture, but would be one of the two whip companies in the area 45 years later which would help keep the area's whip tradition alive. Mr. Grudowski passed away in 1951. By having taught his children well, however, he had made sure that his craft did not pass away with him. Now his son and daughter have passed the knowledge and techniques on to the O'Learys.

The shop is located in the old Russell School House, where it has been for over 15 years. Inside, a wide array of styles and

types of whips are produced, ranging from short stiff "bats" for jumping and barrel racing on horseback to stockyard whips, to supple bullwhips which may reach 20 feet in length. Often, whips are covered with braided leather or thread, and the shop is equipped with machines capable of plaiting either material over appropriate whipstocks or "centers". The machines used for braiding leather are particularly interesting if for no other reason than their age: some are approaching 100 years old. A leather plaiting machine looks something like a large cast iron salad bowl in which a "figure eight" track courses around the inside walls. As a whipstock is drawn slowly up through a hole in the bottom of the "salad bowl", six bobbins clatter around on the serpentine track, each winding a strand of leather around the whipstock. If all goes well, each strand is precisely intertwined with the others. An experienced worker can produce about one dozen long plaited whips each hour on the machine.



YVON HEBERT MAKING A SIX PLAIT STOCK-YARD WHIP ON AN OLD FASHIONED BRAIDING MACHINE.



JOHN ASTIFAN CUTTING BUCKSKIN FOR OX WHIP LASHES

There are two kinds of whip centers around which the leather or thread is braided. The longer whips, mainly the stockyard whips, are made with a fiberglass center. Supplied in all different weights, fiberglass has replaced the previously used, but hard to get, rattan, which was imported from the Indonesian islands.

Some whips must be flexible without being "whippy". Riding crops and some stock whips fit this description. Rawhide, cut into long narrow triangular sections, and twisted around a rattan core, has been used for years as the center in these whips. One company, in Southfield, Massachusetts is now the sole source of such twisted rawhide whipstocks. The twisting is done very gradually — over perhaps a week's time or more — and under controlled humidity. The resulting "stick" is slowly dried over a long period and finally treated in a heated cabinet. It is then ground to a constant



SKIVING [paring] WRIST LOOPS FOR RIDING CROPS.

taper. Before using the rawhide in a whip it is often lacquered or otherwise protected against moisture.

After the whips are plaited, they are rolled in order to smooth out any bumps. And then any decorative touches, such as ferrules or snaps or lashes, are attached. Once completed, the whips are packed and sent off to their destination.

Who buys whips? John O'Leary traces the beginning of an answer when he says, "Well, there are about 120 million head of beef cattle in this country at any one time — we Americans eat a lot of beef — and perhaps 140 to 150,000 of them are transported every working day to feedlots and processing yards. Every trucker, every man in a yard or lot has a whip. So does the cattle broker and, of course, the farmer. So



YVON HEBERT BEGINS TO HAND BRAID AN EIGHT PLAIT LEATHER RACING BAT.



DEBBIE BRUNO ATTACHES A "KEEPER" TO A RIDING CROP.

there is a market in this country for Stockyard whips alone which approaches 300,000 units a year. The bulk of the volume is in inexpensive polyethylene covered whips. We don't go after that trade. We make leather covered stockyard whips which command a much higher price but which will last a great deal longer than the polyethylene types.

Then, there's the other half of our business: horses. Racing is becoming more popular with many states scheduling more days of both flat and harness racing than ever before. And whips at race tracks are like baseballs in a series game — they're replaced frequently. And of course there is the pleasure horse. We have more of them at this moment than ever before in our history — and the horse population is growing; it is estimated that there will be 10 million pleasure horses by 1980 in this

country. So people will be buying whips and crops and bats. And we hope that the market not only grows, but continues more toward crafted products like ours. A leather crop is more expensive than a plastic one, but it will last, become more beautiful with age, and give the owner the satisfaction that comes with having received good value for money. You don't generally get those satisfactions with plastic. Kessie O'Leary reinforces this idea. "We've just come back from a trip to England and naturally, while we were there, we looked at the fine Old English makers of riding whips. Frankly, the products that we are making here in Russell compare very well with theirs. In some cases, I think our quality is superior. So we hope that the American distributors of saddlery and harness who have always imported their whips from England will shift their focus a little closer to home. We've been working hard to let them know that we are here".

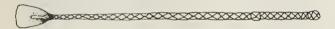
About Whips

ILLUSTRATIONS BY RICK LAURIE



— JUMPING BAT —

Used in sport by horse riders for jumping and barrel racing, the Bat is a short, stiff whip about 15-18 inches long. It is fitted with a wide leather keeper on the business end. There is no wrist loop, so it is easily tucked in a boot or carried in the teeth often done in barrel racing. Turks Head knots, seemingly with no beginning or end, often encircle the shaft to set off the grip section.



— RACING BAT —

Racing Bats are made on a stock about 25 inches long and are more resilient than Jumping Bats. Jockeys sometimes prefer "feathered" bats which feature soft leather fingers ("feathers") protruding from the shaft near the keeper. Long tapering strips of leather, cut by hand, are plaited to cover some straight whipstocks. The smooth finish of the braid is obtained by rolling the whips on a marble slab under a very heavy weight.



— RIDING CROP —

A short riding whip consisting of a stock about 20-23 inches long, fitted with a narrow keeper, the Crop is the standard general purpose whip for horseback riders. It is supplied with a wrist loop and is more flexible than a Bat. There is a wide variety of styles from inexpensive types with plastic shafts and rubber grips to intricately braided leather models fitted with bone grips and sterling silver mounts. Strips of rawhide, wound around a ratten core, dried and ground to an even taper, make very good whipstocks for many straight whips, including Riding Crops. Proteted with a good clear finish, this bare rawhide can make an attractive crop by itself, providing the rider with a crop made from natural, rather than synthetic material and at low cost.

— DRESSAGE WHIP —

Competitors in Dressage classes seek to demonstrate their control and their horse's obedience to command. The Dressage Whip is used usually 36 inches long and quite stiff. Traditionally, it is fitted with a mushroom cap on the butt. Like the other whips made for use with horses, the Dressage Whip is not used to punish, but to provide a signal or reminder.

- TRACK WHIP -

Track Whips, used for Sulky Racing, are made on a 3¾ foot whipstock to comply with the regulations of many Racing Associations. A short snap is permanently affixed to the tip. With the increasing cost and scarcity of quality rawhide, fiberglass cores, similar to short sections of fishing rod, are frequently used as whipstocks for track and other straight whips.



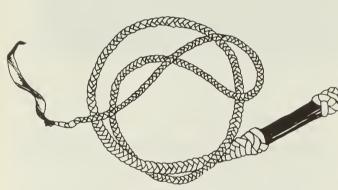
- STOCKYARD WHIPS -

There are over 120 million head of beef cattle on American farms and ranches. Perhaps 145,000 are transported every working day to feedlots and processing yards. It's not surprising that almost one million stockyard whips are required each year by ranchers and handlers. Generally these whips are four to five feet long and are made on fiberglass stocks. Typically inexpensive, they are made in great numbers by pulling hollow core plastic rope over the stock and attaching a rubber grip at the butt. A"drop top" consisting of unsupported rope may be provided and a snap attached to that. More expensive styles are covered in four or six plait braided leather and may have a loaded (weighted) butt to provide better balance and feel. The area around Westfield, Massachusetts, is known for its manufacture of better quality whips, including stockyard whips. As with many other styles, people with no direct interest in animal handling often purchase these whips to decorate a playroom or to create a "conservation piece".



— OUIRT —

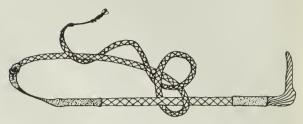
A Quirt is a short flexible riding whip usually of braided leather over a supple leather core. It is about 20-24 inches long and has a slapping action. Quirts are often quite "flashy" with two or more colors of leather, and fringed leather fittings and Turks Heads. If you watch late night movies, eventually you'll see one featuring a band of Mexican riders sporting their Quirts.



— BULLWHIPS —

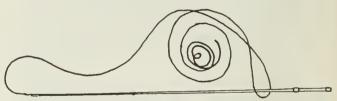
Bullwhips, or Drovers' Whips are long, tapering lashes attached to short handles. When cracked, they produce a loud snap which occurs when the incredible speed of the moving tip breaks the sound barrier. Since bullocks and mules respond to the noise of the cracking lash, drivers of the "20 Mule" and other teams became expert at fancy whip handling. It is said that some could take a fly off an animal's ear at 25 to 30 feet with the tip of the whip, and never touch the ear itself.

Bullwhips are frequently fitted with swivel handles to facilitate throwing the whip. Few people today have the skill or patience to make these whips. Heavy latigo and lace leathers are hand cut into tapering "strings" and plaited over a leather or rope core. The thick section near the grip may be plaited of eight strings, while the "point", or section near the tip may be four plait. Careful hand splicing makes the transition smooth and makes possible the action of the whip.



HUNT CROP

The classic Hunting Crop consists of a rigid stock to which a long supple lash may be attached. Typically, the stock, covered with leather braid, is fitted with an "L" shaped stag-horn handle set off with sterling silver mounts. A long narrow keeper, punched to accept the removeable lash, is attached to the end of the stock. The lash is usually plaited of eight tapered strands of leather in a round braid over a core incorporating a "belly" section near the keeper end. This concentrates weight appropriately so that the whip handles properly. A silk snap finished off the end of the lash. The handle serves the hunter as a tool with which to unlatch, and open and close gates. With the lash, the crop is used by the "Whipper-in" to control hounds. Hunt Crops and lashes are made in varying lengths for "Gents, Ladies and Children".



COACH WHIPS

Coach Whips, used for driving carriages, consist of a long flexible lash attahed to a long flexible whipstock. Before the turn of the century, carriage driving was a popular sport of the very wealthy and English driving whips were made exacting standards for this trade. The best of these whips were made with holly or yew stocks, the best holly being seasoned second growth six to seven years old. Each stock was unique in that each piece of holly or yew or thorn was unique in its number and location of knots. The handle might be covered in pigskin, ivory or mother of pearl. The thong or lash of plaited leather was carefully chosen to balance properly with the stock, and might be 16 feet long. The man in the "box seat" was truly outfitted with a work of art.

YES!, YES!, I SEE THEM!

by Priscilla Sarafin

For a few days, twice each year, this exclamation has been a part of my life as surely as sunrise and sunset. The geese are going over! Many times I have heard, and witnessed their faithful ritual while alone, as well as in the company of others, and it never fails to stir something deep within me that I just cannot explain. A feeling of awe, admiration, fear, respect, tranquility. All these things together.

In the fall of the year, after one or two crisp frosty mornings have passed, and just about potato-diggin' time, I hear that peculiar, pulsating sound, and rush outside to see them going south, towing the golden days of October behind them. Then I know I must discard any plans I might have for the coming day, and tend to the storm windows!

Watching them pass so majestically overhead, (sometimes they come from behind the pines and are low enough to see clearly the outline of feather and foot), there is something that makes me want to cry out, "Wait, don't go!, wait just a little longer!". But as the formation moves out of earshot, I realize a decision has been made, winter is coming.

God has been good to me, and in the night I have wakened to their compelling call. Each time I have left my bed to see their delicate V shape embroidered against the moon. My heart swelled with exhilaration, and yet, at the same time, I felt a frightening sense of loneliness.

Here in New England, we are sure to have teasingly warm days in late winter, but when at last these huge birds come back in early spring, I feel such a sense of peace and gratitude, and know warm weather is surely coming.

One can almost **feel** the "honk honk" call before it can actually be heard, and it seems to be so cheerful, as though they were saying "Hi!, we're back!"

During my early years here on this favorite hillside, it meant extra wood stoves could be taken down, the storm sash removed at last, and the windows thrown open to fill the house attic to cellar with the sweet promise of spring. These years, with more conveniences, it's not such a time-consuming event, but the feeling of satisfaction is still as strong. For another winter is safely behind us, and I can look forward to warm sunny days in my garden and at the clothesline. The smell of newly mowed grass, and cured hay. Long summer evenings and new landscapes to paint!

I doubt there are many souls to whom the call and sight of wild geese does not have a tug on emotions.

Sometimes it seems adventurous; after the loss of a loved one, it is painfully lonely, it can be hauntingly sweet, sometimes frightening. BUT, all the time reminding us that plan and scheme and organize as we "civilized creatures" are wont to do, there is another who will have His way, to be done when and how He sees fit!

Yes!, yes!, I see them!



Some Thoughts on Spring

by Zenon D'Astous

Dawn, the sun spills over New England burning through the morning mist.

The solar beams traveling a slanted path

between the still naked trees, the eart warms slowly

for Spring comes on the frosted wings of March.

The red osier stands out against the last of winter's snow.

The days pass and soon the ice has melted away.

Rills laugh and giggle tumbling over pebbles and last Talls' leaves.

Pond bottoms begin to work as frogs and turtles free themselves

from the mud that has kept them safe during the winter.

Now all rush to the surface to the warmth of the sun.

Gangs of crows return from wintering in the deep woods

and begin immediately to protest loudly the tardiness of Spring.

Cardinals, robins, chick-a-dees, and red-wing black birds sing out

as they establish their territory.

At twilight the pale green mountains of Spring are touched by the bronze

and copper of the setting sun.

In the lightly fragrant misty darkness the peepers start their Spring song.

Far to the South the Canada geese lift off the marshlands of Jexas,

Cross the face of a full moon and head northward over the Great Plains.

The great migration is underway.

When it has come to pass, Winter fires will be ashes and Mother Earth will be ready for the new beginnings of all her creatures.

The peepers soom will make their song, the bird it's nest, the vixen it's den, ready for new life.

And man his plowshare ready to raise newly cut earth to the moldboard. Ponds and brooks full of life, new grass and wild flowers carpet the meadow lands for summer.

In the swamps marsh-marigolds shine like little suns from their beds of reeds.

And as if tomorrow were promised, the magic of Spring comes undaunted, to enrich our lives, to fill our minds and hearts as well.

OF BICYCLES AND GIRLS

by Alice Britton

I can remember my Grandmother Pierce telling me of an incident in her life that we can look back on, and smile at, especially in this day of the liberated woman. I wonder what she would have thought about this ERA referendum that we just voted on in this last election?

She was quite a dynamic person in her own quiet way. Apparently she was more aggressive than her sisters of the time and decided that she had to learn to ride a bicycle. Of course, that fellow Abijah Pierce, that she had set her cap for, was an avid cyclist. She learned to ride so she could join his group. This took place in Greenfield not far from this area. The group would ride from Greenfield to Bernardston, or all over the countryside on a Sunday outing. What fun! More so than just sitting at home sewing a fine seam, which, by the way, she was very capable of doing.

Bicycle-riding for young women at that time in our history was a scandalous thing, as you were showing your legs. The long



A.N. PIERCE'S BICYCLE SHOP ON CHAPMAN ST., GREENFIELD, MASS.

dresses and petticoats were a great hindrance, and nice girls just were not supposed to do those things. She was considered bold and a wild thing!

The older women on her street gossipped about her and her shameful actions. After just so much of this talk, she and her mother designed a divided skirt which would accomodate the fewer petticoats. This covered her legs when tied around the ankles and made it more comfortable to ride, but give up she would not!

It wasn't very long after her venture out in the world of men that the girls all took to riding bicycles and of course today it's just a way of life.

It is interesting to note that she married Abijah Pierce and he, a plumber by trade, conducted business in Greenfield. He ran a Sporting Goods Store, selling and repairing Columbia Bicycles. Needless to say the bicycle remained a very important factor throughout their married lives.

FAMILY REUNIONS

by Ethel Pease

From 1900-1909, the descendants of Edward and Ellen Bromley Higgins would gather at Thanksgiving time at the Higgins' home. Grace Kelso Sherwood recalls that she would usually help Grandma Higgins several days in preparation for the event. When the Higgins family lived on the Bromley Road, about 15-20 adults would be seated in the dining room, while the children gathered around a kitchen table where the supplies were plentiful and parental supervision not too close. Members of the Pease family recall how the sleigh or wagon was lined with blankets with each member bundled up in coats, shawls, and tippets and holding a warm soap stone. The trip took about two hours, and great joy was expressed when the watering tub just above the house appeared, indicating the journey was near completion. Hunting for chestnuts in the grove above the house is another fond memory. A serious blight destroyed the trees in later years.

Other branches of the Higgins family have held reunions in various towns where homesteads still stand. A clipping from Grace Higgins Pease's scrapbook describes such a gathering in North Blandford at the home of Rev. Frank A. Higgins in 1930. This report states: "Higginses may come

and Higginses may go, but there probably always will be enough of those with the old New England name to carry on the traditional reunion of the Higgins family." (unfortunately, at the present time there are no descendants of Edward and Ellen Higgins bearing the Higgins name; the same could be said of the Kelsos, Sherwoods, and Knowltons). Another family gathering is reported in the Elmwood (Illinois) Gazette of March 8, 1911, At this time Barney Prentice Higgins, brother of Edward L. Higgins, and Mary Leet Higgins celebrated their 50th wedding anniversary. Following the trend of the times, Barney Higgins and his brother had migrated to Illinois and established homes there. The account of the reunion reads: "On March 4, 1861, Barney Prentice Higgins and Mary M. Leet drove to Peoria, in company with friends of their youth, and were married. The bride wore a dress of white dotted swiss. The ground was frozen and covered with snow, and the return journey next day was a very cold one. Mr. and Mrs. Higgins first lived in a log house across from their present home. They had a family of 8 children, most of whom with their families returned on March 11, 1911 to help in the celebration."

LOST INDUSTRIES OF WORTHINGTON

Mrs. Edward J. Clark

Courtesy: The Worthington Historical Society

In the settlement of New England townships, the proprietors were not only capitalists, but also builders. They not only laid out roads and highways, but they also looked out for the economic beginnings of the town's life.

In order to induce settlers to come in, they built mills for sawing the trees into materials for building shelters for the people, and grist mills for grinding grain for bread.

Col. Worthington was no exception to this rule. In order to induce people to settle in this town, he built Worthington's first industry, a grist mill, on the Bronson brook, somewhere between the "Briar Patch" and Lawrence Randall's place.

In every history of Worthington that I have read, the site of this mill is given as on or near the site of the Aaron Stevens' mill, but there are old deeds and records which prove rather conclusively that it was located

as I have stated, somewhere on the stream near the Lawrence Randall place, and was run by a man named Bronson, which of course accounts for that stream being called the "Bronson Brook" to this day. So much for the beginning of Worthington's industrial life.

As the population of the town increased, saw and grist mills sprang up like mushrooms all over the town. In reading some of the town histories, one might get the impression that there was a saw and grist mill for every man, woman, and child in town.

And then came tanneries where the farmers took their calf skins to be tanned for making their boots and shoes. One of these tanneries was in the meadow opposite Alden Cady's house in West Worthington. I believe that meadow is now owned by Mr. Carlton Loveland.

The population of Worthington

increased very rapidly from 1776 to 1820, and it was during these years that the industrial life of the town reached its highest point.

From 1820 on, there was a gradual decrease in the population with a corresponding decrease in the number of manufactured articles produced in the town, which of course was to be expected.

Some of the articles which have been manufactured in the town in years past are hats, caps, boots, shoes, nails, saddles, harnesses, chairs, curtains, children's wagons, carts and sleds, joiners' tools, sleighs, bedsteads, screens, sieve rims, whip-butts, and cider brandy. There have been a number of chair and basket factories in town at different times.

A linseed oil mill was built by James Blackman just above Higgins' mill. On the Paul place, Thomas Taylor in 1821 made large hair combs for ladies. Brick was manufactured in a small way in Hubbard Hancock's pasture.

In 1820 there were five blacksmith shops in town, all doing a flourishing business. Besides shoeing the horses and oxen, these shops also made all kinds of hardware, especially door hinges and latches. Fine specimens of their handiwork may be seen in some of the older houses in town.

There were shops where shovel handles, pen-holders, brush handles and coffins were made.

In 1820 the town had three distilleries, those of Jonah Brewster, John Stone, Jr., and Elijah Drury. On the Sam Converse place was a white rock which was considered very valuable for making false teeth.

Flax and wool were produced by every family, and the women spun and wove the cloth which was then sent to a clothier's shop to be fulled, pressed and colored. The first clothier's shop in town was located on the little stream just west of the Hewitt farm, and I have been told that some of the timbers were uncovered at one time.

The town of Worthington used to be noted for the number and quality of its sheep, and the history relates that the citizens of Worthington sat up more nights with lambs, than they ever did with children, and that no one ever should try to raise lambs north of Florida. Some of us who have sat up many a night with lambs will agree with that statement. Where there were sheep there were always woolen mills, where the huge bulging bundles of wool were sent to be carded into rolls. These were spun into yarn at home, and from this yarn the women knitted socks and mittens for the entire family.

It is easy to see that along with changes in the industrial life of Worthington, there have also been changes in household methods and customs. We no longer spin our yarn or weave our cloth for our clothing.

At the present time there is really only one industry left in town and that is dairying, and it is a question in the minds of some how long that can survive.

As we look back over the industrial life of Worthington, in the years past, and compare it with conditions which exist today, perhaps there may be some excuse for feeling a bit pessimistic about the future of our town, but what is the use of bemoaning the loss of industries which could not be made to pay, and for which the town has no use? For instance, what would the town do with five blacksmith shops at the present time?

Conditions changed, and the people were wise enough to meet these conditions, and give up the industries which no longer yielded them a profit.

Perhaps some of you are asking yourselves, "What industry have we left in town today which **does** pay a profit?"

Sequence by Madeline Hunter

The moving texture of darkness Embraces the sun Then devours it. Stealthily, it creeps Over russet hills, Silently absorbs The mounds into itself. Boarded with sentinel cat-tails, The stream is somber, Opaque in solitude. Beyond the stream The darkness commands the creatures, Creeping things That vegetate on woodland floors Senses satiated, they return From the extremeties of the woodland Instinctively to their burrows Scattered nests, Secure and protected Obedience in the fiber Of their beings, Other awake From murky ponds, From grass-thatched holes, From tree hollows Hypnotically bechoned. In rayless obscurity, They wing, and crawl, and leap, From stem, from reed, From bark and moss -Day's elegy Is intoned

Serendipity — by bus Thelma Piscor

Leaving the city the bus ran along country roads into the Berkshire Hills Such hills! Verdant, vibrant trees with tiny white houses tucked into their greenness. Acres of blue sky sparked with white clouds haloing the whole scene, a fine mist grazing all. White birch trees striping the mountain sides, like white thongs binding the earth to the sky. As the bus passed a strange clearing of the mist,

colors of pink and saffron chasing purple shadows into the dark cool greens.

Suddenly,

and unexpectedly a fortunate discovery in beauty.

An open space, a grassy slope, a lake, a lone majestic spruce.

White clouds and the tree peeping shyly at their reflections in the blue mirror.

The tree

daring to stand alone reaching for Utopia in its own way. Over this a blue certainty that Utopia is possible for those who stand tall even if they stand alone.

THE HILLTOWNS and the UNDERGROUND RAILROAD

by Ellie Lazarus

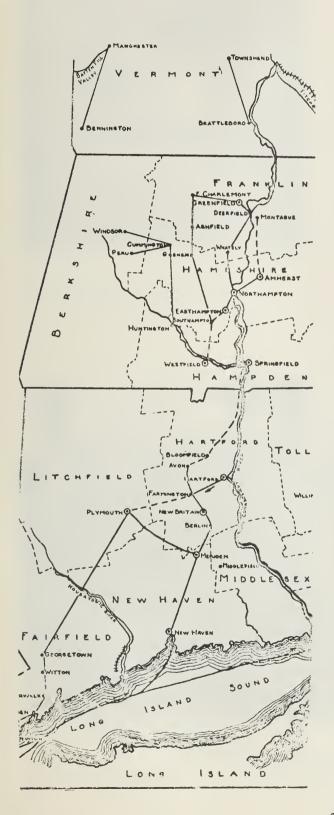
"This house must have been a station for the Underground Railroad because I've found a secret blocked-off place and what else would it be there for?" That's a statement that many people living in Huntington, Worthington, and Cummington have made and a statement that many more have heard. The last time I was at Ida Joslyn's, working on something for "Stone Walls", she said the very same thing to me. and I answered that I sure did wish I knew exactly which houses really were stops for the Underground Railroad! Ida contributed her enthusiastic "me too!", and I left her house saying, "By Golly! I am going to find out!" Well, that was a couple of months ago and I am sure that what I now know is just a beginning.

The Underground Railroad was the route along which slaves escaped from the South on their way north to Canada. As early as 1793, with the Fugitive Slave Act, the aiding of runaway slaves became a penal offense. A fine of \$500.00 had to be paid by a station-keeper for each slave who was caught hidden. After the War of 1812, soldiers, returning from Canada, reported

that slaves were free there. By the mid-19th century the South began to plead for a more rigorous national law and Congress responded with the Fugitive Slave Law of 1850, placing a fine of \$1,000.00 for each concealed slave. The fine was one main reason that the Underground Railroad was so secretive, but probably a more important reason was the social abuse that an abolitionist felt from his fellow townspeople for hiding slaves and helping their cause. Many of these neighbors did not differentiate between the abolition of slavery and total integration.

Night was the only time when the fugitives and their white transporters (called conductors) could feel even partially secure. Ordinarily a fugitive would be fed, put up in a bed in an out-of-the-way part of the house or even the barn, and then be off on his way further north. Slaves were carried from station to station in disguised wagons or in boxes as freight on ships or trains. The course of the fugitive was zig-zag, switching from one route to another, and sometimes even retracing in order to confuse a possible slave-hunter.

There were many possible routes once a slave got as far as Springfield. He usually got to Springfield by way of Hartford and the Connecticut river from Long Island



Sound. Some of the slaves went from Springfield northwestward to Westfield and then either west to Huntington or north through Southampton to Northampton. There was of course, also the direct route from Springfield up the Connecticut River through Northampton and north. Northampton had a very devoted group of Underground Railroad workers, the most active of which was J. Payson Williston, founder of Williston Academy, Cummington was a station for slaves from both Huntington and Northampton. In Westfield there were at least three "Underground Railroad houses": one on Main St., another on Franklin, and the third on School St. I have not located the specific houses.

When slaves reached Huntington, they were housed either with Asa Merritt of Knightville, who is an ancestor of Arthur Cole of County Road, Huntington, or with Myron Munson, whose home was the present Inn at Huntington. I was told by Bill Gaitenby that slaves were actually put up under the floorboards of the barn, which is no longer standing. He had actually lifted up the boards and seen the roomy chamber.

On the way to Cummington slaves usually stopped off in Worthington where they were cared for by Martin Conwell of South Worthington, Russell H. Conwell's father. "My father held, for a time, a kind of partnership with John Brown, whose office was in Springfield, Massachusetts," said Russell Conwell to his biographer and intimate friend, Agnes Burr. "John Brown often visited our little home and always slept in the northwest bedroom." Martin Conwell was also a friend of Frederick Douglas. In describing the first time he saw him, Russell Conwell said, "One night my father drove up in the dark and my elder brother and I looked out to see who it was he had brought home with him. We supposed he had brought a slave whom he was helping to escape. But in the light of the



THE FORMER HOME OF MYRON MUNSON, NOW THE INN AT HUNTINGTON.

"During the first ten years of my childhood," continued Dr. Conwell, "the little loft over the old woodshed on our farm both the farm and the woodshed are still standing on Conwell Road in South Worthington] was very frequently occupied by an escaped slave. Whenever we saw the woodshed locked with a padlock, we knew that a slave was on the inside and that father carried the key. It was not often that we were allowed to see the runaway as he or she usually arrived at night." Guy Thrasher (STONE WALLS, Vol. 2, No. 2) says he remembers, when he was a boy, that the older folks used to reminisce about the colored people who worked in the fields as they were making their way northward to Canada.

lantern a white man was assisting to unhitch the horses and put them in the barn. In the morning this white man sat at the breakfast table and my father introduced us to him, saying, 'Boys, this is Frederick Douglas, the great colored orator.'

"I looked at him, and said, 'He isn't black, he is white.'

"Mr. Douglas turned to us and said, 'Yes, boys, I am a colored man. My mother was a colored woman, and my father a white man. And,' said he, 'I have never seen my father and I do not know much about my mother. I remember her once when she interfered between me and the overseer who was whipping me, and she received the lash upon her cheek and shoulder, and her blood ran across my face and clothes.'



THE WOODSHED OF THE OLD CONWELL FARM STILL HAS ITS PADLOCK.

PHOTOS BY ELLIE LAZARUS



HUMESTEAD IN SOUTH WORTHINGTON

Farther along route 112, beyond South Worthington, is the present Joslyn home, formerly owned by a John Adams. When the Joslyns put in a furnace thirty years ago, the workmen discovered a walled-up room off the dining room which is accessible only through a hole in the celing of the basement. It may well be that that house, too, was a station on the way to Cummington.

Cummington was a 4-way junction for the Underground Railroad. Slaves came from either Northampton or Huntington. They went west onto Peru or Windsor, or north to Ashfield and E. Charlemont. Mr. Kingman housed slaves coming from Northampton at the Kingman Tavern in the center of town, now a superb museum belonging to the Historical Society. The family of Miss Melissa Dawes also received fugitives. This Dawes family then lived in the Southwest corner of the town on Honey Hill Road in a house which first belonged to Stephen Tower. Only a cellar hole remains there. Another receptor of



THE KINGMAN TAVERN, NOW A MUSEUM, WAS A STATION FOR THE "UNDERGROUND RAILROAD".

"passengers" was Deacon Briggs, whose house, midway between Cummington and West Cummington on Route 9, is now owned by the Lionel Lawrences. Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence very graciously showed me the fireplace in the corner of the cellar around which the slaves stayed until they moved on. The last outpost of fugitive slaves which I sought belonged to Arunah Bartlett on Trouble Street. Bill Streeter told me that this particular cellar hole has a remaining chimney base where the slaves had been hidden. The location of this house would undoubtedly have been ideal for slaves whose next destination was Peru or Windsor. Bill also told me of Flora Reed's visit back to Cummington in 1972. As they rode in Bill's car by the house built by her ancestors. Miss Reed remembered that her ancestors had told her of the times when you could see black people out in the fields. This house now belongs to Wyndom Morey.

My investigation of this subject has been rather like bushwacking through a rumored wilderness. Written information is indeed hard to come by. If there was any written communication between conductors about fugitive slaves, it was always couched in guarded or figurative language. Here are a couple of examples of letters on the subject:

Dear Sir:

By tomorrow evening's mail you will receive two volumes of the "Irrepressible Conflict" bound in black. After perusal, please forward, and oblige.

Yours truly,

G.W.W.

Dear Grinnell:

Uncle Tom says if the roads are not too bad, you can look for those fleeces of wool by tomorrow. Send them on to test the market; no back charges.

Yours,

Hub*



THE FORMER HOME OF DEACON BRIGGS NOW THE RESIDENCE OF THE LIONEL LAWRENCES', CUMMINGTON.

*Excerpts from Siebert's The Underground Railroad



THE FIREPLACE IN THE CELLAR OF THE LAWRENCE'S HOUSE AROUND WHICH SLAVES STAYED UNTIL THEY MOVED ON.

All we have to go by now are the memories of those like Guy Thrasher and Flora Reed whose ancestors could remember seeing the runaways and hearing their song:

"I've served my master all my days
Without a dime's reward
And now I'm forced to run away
To flee the lash abhorred.
The hounds are baying on my track—
The master's just behind
Resolved that he will bring me back
Before I cross the line.

Farewell, old master Don't come after me, I'm on my way to Canada Where colored men are free."

Sources: William Gaitenby has done thorough investigations of family lines and property ownership in Huntington.

Guy Thrasher has lived in South Worthington all his life. His ancestors were contemporaries of both Martin and Russell H. Conwell.

Ida Joslyn is a Worthington resident who wouldn't let a curious hidden nook in her house "just exist". Olive Thayer told me about the Dawes' former house and present cellar hole on Honey Hill Road. Bill Streeter treated me to a long talk (in the midst of his busy luggage shop) about "underground homes" in Cummington. He is a careful and schol-

Mr. and Mrs. Lawrence have spent summers in Cummington for over a quarter century and have only recently begun to live there full-time. They moved many a stack of flower-pots to let me get a photo of the hidden fireplace in the cellar.

Burr, Agnes R., Russell H. Conwell and His Work, Winston and Co., Phila., 1917.

arly historian.

Siebert, Wilbur, The Underground Railroad, MacMillan Co., N.Y.C., 1898,

Siebert, Wilbur H., The Underground Railroad in Massachusetts, American Antiquarian Society, Worcester, 1936

Sat. March 10, 1888: A beautiful day, seems like spring; the mercury this morning was up to eighteen, at six tonight it is 36. Conant has made the last of his old sugar into syrup and is going to send it to New York.

Sun. Mar. 11, 1888: Another Sabbath has gone and how have I spent the day? Oh Lord help me to repent of every sin and wilt thou forgive? It has been a stormy day but not very cold, the mercury this morning was up to thirty, tonight it is 32.

Mon. Mar. 12, 1888: A very rough day, it snowed all night and all day, the snow is very deep and the snow has drifted fearfully all day. The drifts are higher than I ever knew them; they are at the eaves of the house and the windows are covered almost over the lower sash. Mercury was 28 this morning, tonight it is only 16.

Jue. Mar. 13, 1888: Another rough stormy day, the drifts are deeper than I ever knew them. Our kitchen windows are completely covered and the east window in the sitting room and a part of the chamber window. The drift reaches to the chimney. The mercury this morning was 10 above 0, at five tonight it is 24. Still storming but the wind does not blow hard now.

Wed. Mar. 14, 1888: A stormy forenoon but this afternoon it is cloudy but does not storm, it is not very cold, the mercury was 28 this morning, tonight it is 34. Conant has shoveled the snow so that we can open the east door and has let a little light into the kitchen.

Thurs. Mar. 15, 1888: A pleasant day. The drifts have settled considerably today. Conant tunneled through the drift yesterday so that they can go out by going under the snow. George and his man and Conant have worked all day trying to shovel out the road, but it is hard work.

William and Electa Miller Gardner lived on what is now Knightville Rd.until her death in 1890 and he continued to live there until

(William and Electa Miller Gardner lived on what is now Knightville Rd. until her death in 1890 and he continued to live there until 1901 when he moved to Westfield. Their home is now the residence of Henry and Aleen Lee. Conant was the son of William and Electa Gardner.)

THESE ARE the GOOD OLD DAYS

by Al Carrington

TOLD TO AND WRITTEN BY: BARBARA VIOCK



AL IN "HI-CUT BOOTS"

In another issue I told of my past and present experiences and memories. It seems lately when I wander through the woods of Montgomery and Huntington, fleeting thoughts pass through my mind. Many things I can't remember, but it seems the days of my youth keep coming back to me as if it were yesterday.

"In the good old days", the kids were just as clothes conscious as they are nowadays. Being in style meant owning a pair of "Hi-cut" boots, but you weren't really "IN" if they didn't have the little pocket to carry a jack-knife on the side. That really made you strut and feel so important. To add to the effect a pair of overalls and a blue work shirt went with the Hi-cuts. Now even though these "Hi-cuts" looked really nice, or so we thought, they didn't provide warmth at all. I'm sure we would have kept them on until our toes fell off from the cold,

rather than take them off and replace them with a warm pair of felts like the older people wore. Those same felts are almost exactly what snow-mobilers and hunters are wearing now. I'm sure on cold winter days I couldn't get along without the pair I now wear. In the warm months we usually went barefoot to school, and most everywhere else for that matter. You had to get your feet toughened and hardened up for the summer so you could walk on stones and run faster than anyone else in the neighborhood.

Spring was tree tapping time for maple syrup. Many times we stayed up all night boiling sap. Before we knew that you were not supposed to boil it in the house, we loosened a lot of plaster and wallpaper. From that time on, our boiling was moved outside to the shed. I can remember carrying two wooden buckets of sap about one half mile to be boiled. We never sold the syrup, just used it for pancakes which sure tasted good on those cold winter mornings. The butter for the pancakes was also churned by hand.

For a real special treat we made our own ice cream by hand, usually on Sundays. The only kind we made was vanilla, really don't know why we didn't have chocolate or some other flavor; I guess vanilla was the easiest. It took all afternoon of churning for one small dish for each of us. Although it was good and we looked forward to it, I never did think it was worth the effort for the amount of ice cream it produced.

In the summer we had to hay, but in the fall it was wood cutting time. This job I hated with a passion. The dead logs and trees had to be dragged down from the woods, usually with Old Peggy's help. Peggy was our work-horse. After being dragged down into the front yard it had to be cut by hand, using a two man cross cut

saw. Often the other "Man" was me, even though I was about ten years old. Some of the smaller wood could be cut up by a saw rig which Jim Watson would bring to the house. When it was cut, my job was to make sure the wood box was full all the time with enough wood to keep the fires burning throughout the day until I returned from school. Now some people may think this sounds interesting, but to me it wasn't the least bit interesting, just a lot of work which I hated more than haying.

Fall was also time to stock up on staples. We would harness the horse for the trip to Miller's store and buy 100 lb. bags of sugar and flour which would be kept in wooden barrels in the pantry for winter use.

One year my sister Ellen and I took the shafts off a horse buggy and equipped it with a rope. We dragged it to the top of Williston hill, sat in it, and down we went. And what a ride we got! When I think of it now it was sure a lot of work for the fast ride down the hill. Most of the time it ended with us being thrown out as we lost control and went flying across the road into the field below. Nowadays people are worried because their kids have skate boards. Those are safe compared to the old fashioned buggy ride we had.

There are many caves in the hills on North and South Rockhouse and many stories were told about them. The tale that really fascinated us the most was about counterfeiters hiding out there in the early 1900's and making a lot of money. Everyone spent many hours looking for any trace of counterfeiters or money, but we never found anything, just saw an occasional wildcat which were prevalent in this area at that time.

The first movie I ever saw was "Snow White and the Seven Dwarfs." Miss Bessie

Smith got permission from the superintendent to take the day off so she could take our class to see the movie. We were all very excited as many of us had never been before. First stop was for dinner at Miss Smith's house, and then to the movie. What a big event! We thought that was the greatest thing we had ever seen, and I guess, in our young lives, it was one of the "thrills of a lifetime".

I guess kids those days were just as mischievious as they are today. One of our favorite practical jokes was burning hot pepper on the woodstove in the one room school, then closing all the doors and windows. We would sit out back of the school and wait for "Teacher" to show up. Her eyes would water, she would choke and gag, and be madder than a wet hen. Germaine Barry and I would be out back laughing. We thought that was really great fun. I'm sure the teacher always knew who did it, as we were the only two boys in the school at the time.

Another big event at school was when a cow across the street was ready to calf. Many times they needed to be assisted, and Germaine and I, being the only boys, were called in to help. I always loved to go as it was an excuse to get out of school for awhile and we always thought it was "very interesting"!!

Winter at school was always great fun, especially when the crust on the snow was hard and slippery. One funny incident that

I recall included Tom Pomeroy, Miss Bessie Smith, our teacher, and Georgette Barry. Tom decided to give the two ladies a ride on his sled. Everyone piled on and down the steep hill they went. In gathering up speed Tom failed to negotiate the corner and hit a stump. All three landed together into a mass of bodies, arms and legs every which way, coming to rest in a big patch of laurel bushes. Poor Miss Smith, she sure took a lot of abuse from all of us at times, but was always a good sport about it.

Another teacher I'm sure everyone that has ever attended school in Huntington, Russell or Montgomery, during that period, will remember was Miss A. Albrow. She was the music teacher and it seems that as long as anyone could remember she had been the music teacher. In fact, I think she was born the music teacher. As far back as I can remember she always drove a Ford car, the one most vivid in my mind is a 1932 Model "A" Ford, number plate 59-100. For years she kept the same number. I believe it was around 1966 I attended her retirement party held in Russell. Curious about her license number, I asked about it. Sure enough she still had number 59-100. Before retiring, I believe she must have taught music for at least a hundred years.

When anyone talks about that period in life they most always refer to it as "The good old days." However, from some of the things I can remember of that period I would be inclined to think

THESE ARE THE GOOD OLD DAYS.

BIRDLIFE in the HAMPSHIRE HILLS

by Virginia Ladd Otis

There is a marvelous assortment of birds to be found about Goshen, perhaps because of its varied surroundings: mixed woods, fields, swamps, lakes, pastures, and brushy thickets. One of our family's joys is that of hearing from our porch the concerts of wood thrushes and veerys floating from the wooded ridge to the west; and from the old blueberry lot south, the liquid notes of the brown thrasher mimicing all the other birds with surprising accuracy. They are the latecomers in spring, and we will not hear them before May. Early-comers are the grackles, with a rusty-hinge chorus, perching all over the tops of yet naked trees like a harvest of fruit on giant blackberry bushes. Somewhat later the woodcock takes up residence in a swampy corner of the pasture, uttering a strange, nasal call best described as "peenk" at dusk. (This sound we heard every spring for years, uncertain whether it came from bird, or frog, or insect!) When alarmed, the woodcock springs from the ground and rapidly spirals high in the air, its wings whistling faintly. After circling widely for a few minutes, uttering a cheeping cry, it lands abruptly in the same spot from which it arose. In this season, also, a piping killdeer haunts the wet pasture, while a trim, little sparrow hawk perches on fencepost or wire to survey the area. When the snow has gone at last, and the air after a rain is like a water color. hazy and soft with sun and cloud, the treetops dreamily moving, the mourning doves are seen in pairs floating languidly across the tinted landscape.

Dramatically, at the awakening of spring, the robins and bluebirds arrive from the south. In recent years their numbers

have diminished: but last spring we saw larger flocks of robins as well as flocks of bluebirds numbering seven or eight, an improvement over the year before, when we noticed but three or four individuals. After lingering for a week or so, making a pretence of selecting a nesting box from several in the field, they abandon them to the tree swallows and the sparrows, and fly away north. Not for several years has a pair nested in one of the boxes; yet one pair found a nook somewhere in orchard or woods, nearby, for we observed them during the summer. Since they are so rare, nowadays, it always seems a special favor to see a bluebird!

At this time of year we may hear the ruffed grouse drumming from deep in the woods, a sound reminiscent of a putting outboard motor. However, the bird's drumming is uneven, starting slowly, gradually revving up to a blur of sound, controlled by the beat of his wings against the air. We may imagine the cock treading sedately along a log, fan tail spread and neck feathers ruffed, head cocked to listen and watch for a possible mate, wings half lifted to begin another passionate summons. A slightly deranged bird which keeps tapping industriously on a metal roof or mailbox for days on end proves to be a sizeable brown woodpecker with yellow chest and scarlet crest, known as the yellow-bellied sapsucker. He it is who holds the responsibility for all those series of holes encircling apple tree limbs, each drilled for a taste of sap, a habit not at all beneficial to the tree!

When the warbler migration goes through in May, the thickets and woodlands

play host to a symphony of birdsong. Many will pass on, but among those who stay will be the friendly Maryland yellow-throat, the chestnut-sided, black-throated blue, and black-throated green warblers. The yellow warbler is often seen in spring and summer, flitting like a dot of sunlight through the blueberry and willow swamp.

Among a variety of hawks found in this area are the redtail, Cooper's, and common broad-winged, a medium sized hawk with white banded tail, which nests faithfully in our woods. When intruders are spied within their territory, the adults blow their police whistles, a shrill and piercing sound! Occasionally we see a vulture, or two or three together. Larger than any of the hawks, black as crows with untidy-looking feathers. they simply soar like gliders with never a wing beat, their wings held in a mild V shape as they veer and tip a little drunkenly in the air currents. The kingbird, (fisher?), dressed in a gray coat with white vest, not much bigger than a robin, nests in our pasture and polices the whole area. He cannot abide the presence of big birds, and takes fierce delight in harrassing them. Once I saw a kingbird dive on a crow's head from above, beating him to the ground, a case of the bully being bullied! There is something gratifying in the sight of a great hawk climbing the sky in consternation, followed by a tiny kingbird in close pursuit, like a fighter plane after a bomber.

Of the owls heard and seen hereabout, the barred owl is by far the most common, for it often flies in the daytime. Its call is the familiar six hoot call with a stutter, which goes like this: "hoo-hoo-hoo-ha-hoo-hoo". The great horned owl gives one hoot with a



downward inflection at the end. The little screech owl, of course, doesn't give a hoot(!), but has a quavering, ghostly trill, good sound effects for a hallowe'en party! While horseback riding one late afternoon in the DAR woods near Camp Howe, I saw a barred owl fly into a tree, where it sat on a limb directly over the trail. Craning my neck to look up, I found the bird watching us intently, staring down with experssionless eyes, black pools in a gray feathered face. I had an uncomfortable feeling that the creature was about to swoop down on me, its prey, for it had a cruel, implacable stare. No wonder the mice tremble and rattle the leaves, thus revealing their whereabouts, when the great owls give their hunting calls! They have strong beaks for rending, and under their feathered legs are hidden scimitars of death. One summer evening as several of us were walking along the road past Highland Lake, we heard strange cries in the dusky treetops. Whether the combination of squeak - squeal - chirp denoted bird or insect we couldn't guess. Certainly it was something we had never heard before. When a sizeable patch of gloom detached itself from the top of an oak and flew from one limb to another, the mystery was solved. The cries must have been coming from owlets just learning to fly, still under the solicitation of mother owl.

When certain insects hatch on the surface of the lake, the tree swallows have a holiday. Sweeping over the water with open bills, they garner the flies with sticky tongues, and milling in a cloud of birds, crying their excitement, they wheel above the dam to go skimming back across the lake, all with a sharp and lovely grace which takes one's breath. One of the pleasures of hiking or riding in the summertime is that of glimpsing a rose-breasted grosbeack, or a tanager perched on a spruce top like a living coal against the clear sky, sounding its notes of husky joy.

Happiest of the field birds seem to be the goldfinches, looking like gold sparks blown on the wind as they settle among the dandelions or buttercups, searching for seeds. At the turn of the summer, their household duties accomplished, they ride the air as if on rollercoasters, closing their wings and dropping, while uttering three cheeps, then opening their wings for a rising motion. Down they go, cheep-cheep, up they go; down, cheep-cheep-cheep, up. It looks as though the goldfinches have more fun than anyone! During our first little snowstorm early in November, hearing birds singing aloft, I looked up and spied a flock of goldfinches pursuing their sport amid the thickly falling flakes. Though many remain all winter, they are less easily recognized, for the bright gold has become tarnished to brown in their winter plumage.

By fall, the songbirds, freed at last from the domestic trials of summer, now looking forward to social flights and southern vacations, become giddy. Flocks of juncoes, flashing white striped tails, chase one another about the apple trees in the pasture, carefree as children playing at recess. Cedar waxwings explore the shrubbery and vines for interesting fruit, mocking the cat with a nasal whistle. Again the bluebirds come, gladden our hearts for a day, and then pass on to the south.

One of the most thrilling of bird sounds is the honking of migrating geese from high in the sky. We must drop what we are doing to watch the flight, a V perhaps, or several V's together in a loose formation, a delicate ink etching against the sky of lines steadily pulsating or wavering, each bird quivering with the tempo of powerful wing beats; the V's shifting, regrouping, but ever advancing toward their objective southward. Within a day or two, several flocks may go over, both night and day. Occasionally a small flock will land in a field nearby, or on the lake. This fall, on October 20th, twenty geese sat on the lake



near the dam, resting. When they saw me approaching the shore, they did not fly up, but paddled further out onto the lake.

In winter we feel a closeness to the birds which come to the feeders, looking upon them as pets, our favorite being the chickadees, those gay little bohemians in their jaunty black berets and beards. Out-of-doors, too, they keep us company as they fly along through the trees, trailing a music of tinkling bells. The nuthatch attends the feeder, also, seeming a bit odd in his manner of hanging upside down to eat. Faithful visitors are the woodpecker cousins, downy and hairy, the tree sparrows equipped with chestnut caps, and of course the blueiays, those rakish, handsome birds of doubtful virtue. Out the window one may spy a flock of pine grosbeaks, brightening the landscape with their rosy feathers; or snowbuntings, flashing white and gray as they garner weedseeds above the drifted snow. A slim, graceful hawk flying low over the white field, searching for careless mice, will likely be the marshhawk.

In the winter woods the ruffed grouse perch among the evergreens, or burrow in the snow to let the worst of the storm pass over their heads. Sometimes a heavy crust forms over the snow and they become trapped and die; and they must be ever on guard against predators, such as foxes, bobcats, and owls. One of the showiest birds that we may see, winter or summer, is the pileated woodpecker, a bird of military aspect in his black and white uniform topped with a red cockade. These large fellows have a raucous call, but are reticent, staying hidden in the woods for the most part, attacking the ancient trees, where chips on the ground and cavities in dead limbs reveal that their strong bills have mined them to the marrow.

The Banks of the Westfield River

by Rose Lisowski

The banks of the Westfield River Still yield Their endless treasures To their dwellers.

The buried flint heads of arrows, Scattered. Clay, lamina disk, Jouched and crumbles.

The bottles, sugar bowl, reveal Sifted,
Water green, cobalt blue,
Fans and diamond points.

The bittersweets and blackberries Share with Yellow violets red Sumac riches.

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ABOUT OUR CONTRIBUTORS

ALICE BRITTON is the local history buff of Russell where she has lived all her life.

MRS. EDWARD CLARK was a member of the Worthington Grange. The article was contributed by John Payne of the Worthington Historical Society.

ZENON D'ASTOUS, an author of poetry and prose, contributes regularly. He lives in Huntington.

ANNE GARDNER lives in Hendersonville, North Carolina, but frequently visits her husband's family in the area.

YVON HEBERT is a senior at Gateway High School. He lives in Crescent Mills.

MADELINE HUNTER is a 7th grade teacher of Language-Arts at Gateway Middle School.

IDA JOSLYN, who lives in Worthington, not only writes for STONE WALLS, but is an editor and wears several hats.

ELLIE LAZARUS lives in Huntington and free-lances for area newspapers.

ROSE LISOWSKI lives in Westfield. She teaches private piano lessons and has five sons.

JOHN O'LEARY is a resident of Blandford and smokes a pipe.

ROBERT O'NEIL lives in Westfield and wrote the article as a student at Westfield State College.

VIRGINIA LADD OTIS lives in Goshen and writes feature articles for the Daily Hampshire Gazette.

ETHEL PEASE, a retired English teacher, is the Librarian in Middlefield.

THELMA PISCOR is a resident of Middlefield.

PRISCILLA SARAFIN lives on a farm on Ireland St. in Chesterfield.

BARBARA VIOCK has contributed two articles about Al Carrington. She lives in Westfield.

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"No outsider, driving by a stonewall, will count in his mind the rocks turned up by the plow and carried in callus hands to the edge of the field."

CHARLES McCARRY

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